

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 31-35 and 48-50 without prejudice or disclaimer.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of generating a search engine query for locating an online site in response to user responses to one or more questions, the method comprising:

providing to a user, without user initiation, one or more questions that are each associated with a plurality of predefined answers and designed to elicit information from a user so as to identify at least one of a plurality of online sites to present to the user, wherein at least one of the predefined answers is selected based at least in part on information about the user and at least some of the plurality of online sites are located remotely from a site providing the questions;

receiving in response to a question one of the plurality of predefined answers associated with the question, each of the received predefined answers being associated with a keyword;

identifying online sites based at least in part on the keywords associated with the received predefined answers; and

displaying at least one link to at least one online site returned by the query.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing comprises:

retrieving a survey page, the page including at least one of the questions; and
presenting the survey page to a user within a Web property.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the questions, the plurality of predefined answers, the keywords and the link are stored within a database.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the link is a uniform resource locator (URL).

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the questions are stored according to a question profile, and wherein each of the plurality of predefined answers is stored according to an answer profile.

6. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the link is associated with the keyword within the database.

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7. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the database is connected to a server hosting a Web property.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the database is connected to a server hosting a Web portal.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the user and the Web portal are connected via the Internet.

10. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of displaying the link in a window of the Web property.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of redirecting the user to the online site via the link.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of redirecting the user to the online site further comprises displaying the online site in a window of the Web property.

13. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the step of retrieving a link comprises:

querying the database to determine if the selected one of the plurality of answers is associated with the link;

retrieving the link from the database.

14. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the keyword is provided to the database by a keyword auction provider.

15. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the keyword is provided to the database by a sponsor.

16. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the question is directed to at least one of demographic information of the user and an interest of the user.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of retrieving a link comprises the steps of:

retrieving a plurality of links;

selecting at least one of the plurality of links.

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18. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of selecting at least one of the plurality of links comprises:

determining an order of preference from among the plurality of links;
retrieving the link, wherein the link is highest in the order of preference.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the step of providing the questions comprises the steps of:

determining a rating associated with a question and the question's predefined answers;
analyzing a plurality of questions stored in the database;
selecting one of the plurality of questions based on the determined rating.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the step of determining a rating comprises the step of:

determining a first value related to remuneration related to keywords associated with the question and the predefined answers.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein the step of determining a rating further comprises the step of:

determining a second value related to appeal of the user as to the question.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein the rating is derived using the first value and the second value.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein the step of determining a rating further comprises the step of: adding an additional value to the rating to weight the rating.

24. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein the appeal of the user is based on at least one of demographic information supplied by the user and interest information supplied from the user.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the demographic information supplied by the user is maintained in a profile within the database.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the Web portal is contained within a window, and wherein displayed information is displayed within the window.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the presented online site is made at least partially opaque.

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28. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the presented online site further includes a displayed control so the user can more clearly view the presented Web page.

29. (Original) The method of claim 26 further comprising:
presenting a plurality of additional links within the window, whereby selecting one of the additional links redirects the user to a second presented online site.

30. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
presenting at least one additional question to the user based on the answer received to a previous question.

31-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) A method of targeting an online site or document to a user based on the user's responses to questions, the method comprising:

associating the online site or document with a predefined answer to a subsequent question, the subsequent question having a plurality of selectable answers including the predefined answer, each answer being configured to ascertain a user's interest in answering additional questions or in viewing the online site or document;

presenting to a user, without user initiation, one or more preliminary questions, each of the preliminary questions having predefined answers and being configured to determine the user's interest in additional preliminary questions or in the subsequent question;

upon receiving an answer indicative of the user's interest in the subsequent question, presenting the final question to the user;

receiving one of the plurality of selectable answers to the subsequent question;
and

if the received answer is the predefined answer, retrieving the associated online site or document and providing the retrieved associated online site or document.

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37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 wherein said step of associating the online site or document with a predefined answer comprises the step of:

associating at least one keyword with the predefined answer, the at least one keyword being associated with the online site or document.

38. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein said step of associating at least one keyword with the predefined answer comprises the step of:

associating the at least one keyword to at least one root term, the root term being associated with the predefined answer.

39. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein the association between the keyword and the online site or document is based on information from a keyword auction provider.

40. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein the association between the keyword and the online site or document is based on information from a search engine.

41. (Original) The method of claim 39 wherein said step of providing the online site or document comprises the step of:

providing a link to the online site or document via a Web property.

42. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein said step of presenting the question comprises displaying the question and the plurality of selectable answers within the Web property.

43. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein the online site or document is at least one of a Web page and Web site.

44. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein the predefined answer is associated with a plurality of documents including the online site or document, and wherein said step of retrieving the associated online site or document includes:

selecting the online site or document from among the plurality of documents.

45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44 wherein the step of selecting the online site or document is based at least partially on information provided by a keyword auction provider.

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46. (Original) The method of claim 45 further comprising the steps of: determining that the online site or document has been provided; receiving remuneration directly or indirectly from the keyword auction provider.

47. (Currently Amended) A method of targeting an online advertisement to a particular user based on the user's responses to survey questions, the method comprising:

associating one or more keywords with a predefined answer to a subsequent survey question, the subsequent survey question having a plurality of selectable answers including the predefined answer;

presenting one or more preliminary survey questions to a user, without user initiation, each preliminary survey question being associated with a plurality of answers, each answer being associated with at least one keyword;

receiving the user's answers to the preliminary survey questions;

determining, based at least in part on the keywords associated with the user's answers, the user's preferences regarding responding to additional survey questions or viewing a targeted advertisement;

presenting the subsequent survey question in response to a determination that the user's preference is to answer the subsequent survey question;

receiving in response to the subsequent survey question one of the plurality of selectable answers; and

if the received answer is the predefined answer, presenting at least one link to an online advertisement associated with the predefined answer's keyword; wherein the presented link has been chosen, at least in part, because the linked advertisement is calculated to result in greater financial gain than other advertisements.

48-50. (Canceled)

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Please add the following new claims:

51. (New) A method of generating a search engine query for locating an online site in response to user responses to one or more questions, the method comprising:

providing one or more questions that are each associated with a plurality of predefined answers and designed to elicit information from a user so as to identify at least one of a plurality of online sites to present to the user, wherein at least some of the plurality of online sites are located remotely from a site providing the questions;

receiving in response to a question one of the plurality of predefined answers associated with the question, each of the received predefined answers being associated with a keyword;

identifying online sites based at least in part on the keywords associated with the received predefined answers; and

displaying at least one link to at least one online site returned by the query.

52. (New) A method of targeting an online site or document to a user based on the user's responses to questions, the method comprising:

associating the online site or document with a predefined answer to a subsequent question, the subsequent question having a plurality of selectable answers including the predefined answer, each answer being configured to ascertain a user's interest in answering additional questions or in viewing the online site or document;

presenting to a user one or more preliminary questions, each of the preliminary questions having predefined answers and being configured to determine the user's interest in additional preliminary questions or in the subsequent question;

upon receiving an answer indicative of the user's interest in the subsequent question, presenting the subsequent question to the user;

receiving one of the plurality of selectable answers to the final question; and

if the received answer is the predefined answer, retrieving the associated online site or document and providing the retrieved associated online site or document.

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53. (New) A method of targeting an online advertisement to a particular user based on the user's responses to survey questions, the method comprising:

associating one or more keywords with a predefined answer to a subsequent survey question, the subsequent survey question having a plurality of selectable answers including the predefined answer;

presenting one or more preliminary survey questions to a user, each preliminary survey question being associated with a plurality of answers, each answer being associated with at least one keyword;

receiving the user's answers to the preliminary survey questions;

determining, based at least in part on the keywords associated with the user's answers, the user's preferences regarding responding to additional survey questions or viewing targeted content;

presenting the final survey question in response to a determination that the user's preference is to answer the subsequent survey question;

receiving in response to the subsequent survey question one of the plurality of selectable answers; and

if the received answer is the predefined answer, presenting at least one link to targeted content associated with the predefined answer's keyword.